



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

700 Third Avenue • 4th floor • Seattle, Washington 98104 • (206) 684-0228

REPORT ON DESIGNATION

LPB 180/02

Name and Address of Property: **Roosevelt High School**
1410 NE 66th Street

Legal Description: Blocks 8 and 9 James Division of Green Lake Addition together with Vacated Streets, Ordinance No. 243214. Blocks 1 and 2 University sub-division, together with portion of vacated 67th Street. Also portion of the East 1/2 of S.E. 1/4 of S.E. 1/4 of Section 5 TWP 25 R.4.E W.M. lying North of University sub-division and South of Northeast 68th Street between Brooklyn Avenue Northeast and 15th Avenue Northeast.

At the public meeting held on June 5, 2002, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of Roosevelt High School as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards for designation of SMC 25. 12.350:

D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, period, or of a method of construction

E. It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder

DESCRIPTION

Setting

Roosevelt High School is located at 1410 Northeast 66th Street in the Ravenna neighborhood of northeast Seattle. The immediate neighborhood around the school is primarily comprised of single-family houses dating back to the 1920's. There are some commercial structures along 15th Avenue NE and 12th Avenue NE. The school site is bound by NE 68th on the north and NE 66th Streets on the south, and by 12th Avenue NE on the west and 15th Avenue NE on the east. The grounds are four blocks north of Ravenna Park (Cowen Park) and four blocks south of Roosevelt Reservoir. Fifteenth Avenue NE is a major north-south arterial extending from the University of Washington area. The school is about one mile from the University District.

The campus of Roosevelt High School sits on a 9.48-acre rectangular lot that slopes down towards the south and west. The school consists of the 1922 original three-story building, a 1928 addition

**Administered by The Historic Preservation Program, The Seattle
Department of Neighborhoods**

"Printed on Recycled Paper"

that is compatible in style to the original structure, a 1961 gymnasium and a 1968 annex. The original 1922 building is located on the southeast edge of the site with the main entrance facing south. The 1928 addition is attached to the 1922 structure and located on the northeast corner of the lot. Two detached 1960's buildings are located to the west of the original structure, and a playfield and track occupy the west half of the campus.

The original building is raised above street grade on the south, accessed by a series of wide concrete stairs built into a terraced south slope planted in lawn. The stairs terminate in a concrete terrace at the main entrance to the building. Terra cotta balustrades flank the terrace with wrought-iron light standards installed in 1930. Paved paths from a lower corridor run along the building perimeter to the east and west. A second set of concrete stairs with pipe railing was installed at the west end of the south façade when the gymnasium was built in 1961. The gymnasium is located five to six feet above street grade on the south with a paneled fence along the south lot line. Concrete stairs placed on the west side of the gymnasium lead to the playfield and track that is raised above street level on the south and behind a concrete retaining wall.

The east side of the main building gradually falls below street grade to the north. Along the east side between the building and the street is a fifty-foot strip that is below street level and landscaped with lawn, bushes and trees. An iron fence separates the sidewalk from lower level of the building site. There is a set of concrete stairs near the north end of the main building that provides access to lower level of the site from 15th Avenue NE.

The north wings of the building are below street grade accessed through a paved lot. A set of concrete stairs runs down from the street level along the west side of the building. When it reaches the building, it continues as a path covered with a 1960's metal canopy, linking the main building at grade with the 1968 annex to west and the 1961 gymnasium to southwest. Original landscaping is limited to the 1922 building. Landscaping improvements were made in late 1960's. Currently, there are essentially no on-site parking areas for staff or students. The school uses 15th Avenue NE and 12th Avenue NE as bus load and unloads.

Currently, there are five portables on the campus, two located on the southeast corner of the 1922 main building, and another three located on the west side of the 1922 structure between the 1961 gymnasium and 1968 annex.

Description of the Trees on Site

There are several notable trees on Roosevelt campus. Arthur Lee Jacobson, an arborist who wrote a book *Trees of Seattle* in 1989, provided a report to the district in 2002. It indicates:

A Gingko tree (*Ginkgo biloba*), the closest to the main building of three notable trees located at the southeast corner of the site, is set in a triangular bed of lawn. It was donated by the Nishitani family and is the largest specimen of its kind in Seattle on public property. It is approximately 60 feet tall with a trunk circumference of 5 feet and 2 inches. The Gingko is being shaded adversely by the extending branches of the neighboring two trees and suffers from dry summers. It is a very long-lived species, over 200 years in North America and if given adequate water and time it can become very big.

Southeast of the Ginkgo, a Scarlet Oak (*Quercus coccinea*) is a landmark massive tree, easily seen from the intersection of 15th Avenue N.E. and N.E. 66th Street. Although no substantiating documentation has been located, it is believed that the oak tree was donated by the Roosevelt family. Its trunk is very wide; currently 10 feet and 6 inches in circumference and its stout low horizontal limbs extend into all directions including the power lines and the adjacent Ginkgo tree.

Southwest of the Ginkgo and down in a hollow, is a Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*). It is the second largest or possibly the largest specimen of its kind on public property in Seattle. Its trunk is 9 feet and 3 1/2 inches in circumference. Like the oak, it can grow over 100 feet wide and live hundreds of years and its branches also extend into the power lines.

A large and mature Japanese flowering cherry tree is located south of the main building. Another smaller one is located east of the 1928 addition to the main building.

On the east side of the campus along 15th Avenue N.E., a single Ginkgo tree was planted on Earth Day, April 22, 1999 to commemorate former Superintendent John Stanford.

Along N.E. 68th Street is a noteworthy row of eleven American white elms (*Ulmus americana*) planted as street trees in City property. Their size and condition varies greatly and some interfere with the sidewalk and curb. The City of Seattle's tree survey of 1996 indicates the typical trunk diameter as 33 inches. They need to be closely monitored and treated to abate Dutch elm disease, a major and expensive problem.

Trees and landscaping at the east and west end of the Gymnasium building were provided in 1961-62 with the Gymnasium building and playfield construction.

Physical Description of The Buildings

Exterior of 1922 Building

The original 1922 building is a three-story reinforced concrete structure with brick veneer laid in a running bond pattern and trimmed with a mottled mat-glazed beige terra cotta. The entire building has flat roofs with raised parapets and terra cotta coping. The main building corners have terra cotta quoins. The three-story sections of the building's exterior façade have a molded terra cotta water table above the first floor windows and a deep molded terra cotta cornice. The windows are typically twelve-by-twelve double-hung wood sashes with terra cotta sills.

The main south elevation has a projecting center bay that is almost entirely in terra cotta. The first floor has a rusticated terra cotta base with three recessed semi-circular arched portals leading to paired glazed and paneled doors with fan-lights. Paired monumental pilasters with modified Corinthian capitals divide the second and third floors into three bays. Two five-by-six paneled windows are located between the pilasters. The spandrels between second and third story windows are bracketed pedimented terra cotta panels. The center panel has a lamp while the side panels have scrolls. An ornamental terra cotta balcony projects beyond the plane of the building below the second story windows with terra cotta consoles below. The balustrade has truncated turned balusters

above blind terra cotta panels with balusters in relief. There are terra cotta panels at the third points in the balustrade. The center panels have two stone owls symbolizing knowledge and wisdom. Originally, there were six urns above the balcony rail on the second story. Two of them are now missing. The parapet above the entry bay has a terra cotta panel. The school's name is incised in the center flanked by scrolls with opened books. Original six terra cotta urns have been removed from the top of the parapet near the roof.

The east and west elevations of the three-story section of the 1922 building are identical except for the windows above the entrances. The southern bay is a non-fenestrated brick wall terminating the front classroom block. The northern bay has three double-hung windows at each story. On the east façade of the main building above the two entrances, the double-hung windows have been replaced with paneled windows.

Next to each of the end bays are projecting secondary bays leading to internal corridors and stairwells. Each of these secondary entrances have rusticated bases and flat-arch portals with a pair of glazed and paneled doors with sidelights and figured terra cotta panels above. On the west façade the second story window is a double-hung wood sash. The third floor window is a double-hung sash with multi-light sidebars and a fanlight with molded terra cotta trim. Monumental pilasters flank the windows. The spandrel between the second and the third story windows has a terra cotta panel with a swan neck pediment. The second story window has balcony with turned terra cotta balusters.

Between the side elevation entry bays are seven banks of three double-hung windows separated by flush brick piers. The west elevation is somewhat obscured by the addition of a one-story metal canopy which runs along the west edge of the building connecting to the 1968 cafeteria annex. The northern bay on the west façade has been significantly altered by a second-story steel and glass bridge connecting the annex to the second floor of the original 1922 building. The north elevation of the main building has been covered by the 1928 addition. The corners of the building are detailed with terra cotta quoins.

Exterior of 1928 Addition

Six years after construction of the main building, Floyd Naramore designed an addition to the north end to house a botany lab, music rooms, five classrooms and several other specialized labs and classrooms. The addition matches the form and materials of the original structure although the brick is not an exact match in color and texture.

The addition is asymmetrically H-shaped. On the east, a one-story wing was added with terra cotta coping, corner quoins and pressed brick veneer. The east façade windows continue the rhythm established by the wing to the south. The north elevation of this building has a terra cotta trimmed entry bay with a semi-circular arched portal leading to recessed doors. The portal has flush brick panels at the springing points of the arch, which wrap around the inside of the portal and are ornamental with shields. The panels connect to the terra cotta lintel has a sunburst pattern. The west elevation of this façade has been altered through the addition of a one-story extension with metal sash windows.

On the west, a two-story component was added to the existing west wing, continuing the parapet height. The 1928 wing has terra cotta coping and terra cotta quoins at the corners, and a continuation of the water table. The windows on the western elevation continue the rhythm of the earlier wing. There is a pair of glazed and paneled doors with a multi-light transom bar on the first door. The north elevation has double-hung windows with terra cotta sills on the second floor. The east elevation has been altered. One pair of service doors with transoms and flanking narrow windows has been enclosed with brick.

The north elevation between the wings consists of banks of double-hung windows. Two of them at the eastern end of the façade have been enclosed with brick.

Interior of 1922 and 1928 Building

The original 1922 building is a three-story double hollow square structure. It consists of single-loaded corridors with rooms on the exterior edges, on the second and third floors, wrapping around the one-story rooms and forming two-story light courts. A three-story auditorium projects into the center of the square from the north side of the building creating light courts on both sides. Three-story internal wings connect to the end of the auditorium forming a second hollow square to the north, enclosed on the north end by a two-and-one-half story block projecting towards the north. The latter block houses gymnasiums lit by skylights. Two-story wings flank the gymnasiums and a one-story wing runs along the north edge. Ceilings are plaster. Walls are hollow clay tile with plaster finish. Door and window casings and casework are painted fir. Floor finishes are magnesite.

The main lobby is centrally located on the south side of the 1922 building. Three arched-top entrance doors with fanlights open to the lobby on the south façade. Flattened arched openings on the north end of the east and west walls lead to the main corridors. Stairwells are located at the end of each corridor. The north wall of the lobby mirrors the south wall with paneled double doors to the auditorium at the two side arches. Similar arched-top designs are found over the main office door on the west wall and an anteroom door right across the main office on the east wall. Ornamental plaster medallions with classical figures symbolizing arts and sciences decorate the walls between the entrance and auditorium doors and above the main office door and anteroom door. A running ornamental plaster band above the plaster cornice decorates the perimeter of the plaster ceiling. The lobby floor includes a two-toned diagonal square pattern. A mosaic school seal set in the floor is centered on the openings to the auditorium. It reads "What I am to be I am now becoming, Roosevelt High School, Seattle, Washington, 1922". The north wall arches above the two auditorium entrances and the wall between two entrances have large murals, painted by Paul Gustin in 1926, depicting scenes of Lt. Peter Puget exploring the Sound, early settlers at Alki, and Mt. Rainier and Native American hunting deer.

The three-story auditorium has a main floor and a balcony with a capacity of nearly 1,000. It has been significantly altered in 1960's. The auditorium had a seating capacity close to 1,500 when the school opened in 1922. Its ceiling is coffered with paneled beams. Side walls are decorated with fluted modified Corinthian columns with an ornamental classical lamp motif above each capital and a dentiled cornice. The proscenium arch soffit is paneled. At the center of the arch is a classical ornamental panel with two griffins holding a lyre. The angled north walls adjacent to the stage have swan-neck shaped voluted doorframe tops. The arched overdoor has a central bracket. Ornamental plaster supply grilles above the exit doors visually balance the wall around the stage opening. Tablet

arm seating replaced the original seats at the main floor in the 1960's. The original seats remain at the balcony level. A stage corridor to the north of auditorium provides access to the music room. The original balcony existed at the second and third floor and now only exists at the third floor. The second floor exits were closed to create storage spaces for the library. A light booth is at the center of the balcony and it exists at the third floor. Original exit signs are found above the exit doors.

Two original gymnasiums, one for boys and one for girls, are located on the second floor north side of the 1922 building. Each gym has tripartite windows on the north elevation. Painted wood ceilings and large skylights over each gym are supported by steel trusses. Above the boys' gym is located a cork-floored running track. The original three large wall openings with roll-down wood shutters between the two gyms have been replaced with walls and a double door. The floor is parquet with square patterns. Original exit signs are found above the exit doors in the girls' gym.

The school library is located on the second floor south side of the 1922 building. The original design has been completely remodeled. The ceiling is covered by acoustic panels. It is unknown whether or how much of the original ornamental plaster detailing remains; small portions of trim are visible. The floors are carpeted. The current library entrance opens to the hallway with a double wooden strip door. Storage rooms, librarian's office, and workroom are located on north side of the library. The center section has a circulation desk, a security device, and magazine shelves. The south side of the library has a computer section, a large reading area, and bookshelves.

The 1928 addition, located on the north side of the campus near NE 68th Street, houses 13 classrooms and labs and an external greenhouse. The 1928 interior is compatible with the original 1922 building. Ceilings are covered by acoustic panels. Lighting fixtures are fluorescent lights. Floor finishes are terrazzo or magnecite.

1961 Gymnasium Addition

The 1961 gymnasium building, designed by Ralf E. Decker and his firm, is located west of the main building. It is a detached two-story concrete and steel structure with brick veneer and pre-cast concrete aggregate exterior panels.

Decker described the building in his preliminary presentation package to the district as follows:

Economy in construction has been a real consideration achieved by compactness of the building shape and simplicity in the structural design; especially, in the spanning of the main court area by use of 100 foot pre-formed and pre-stressed concrete girders.

Exterior and interior aesthetics have also been a prime consideration as well as student and spectator visual and body comfort. There should be a homogenous blend and transition between the two buildings by employing this simple building shape, nestled into the high bank and using compatible building materials and related landscaping...

The building features white pre-cast concrete columns expressed on the interior and exterior, with "Sahara Mission" Norman brick veneer infill wall panels, pre-cast aggregate wall panels, and a flat, planar roof, typical of the 1960's New Formalism style.

The ground floor of the building is classified as a basement due to the amount of area below grade. A mechanical penthouse is at the north side of the building roof. The Athletic Department on the first floor (upper level) has a women's locker room and a men's locker room. The ground floor (lower level) houses the Physical Education Department locker rooms, showers, drying areas, toilets, and teachers' offices. Stairways at the east and west end of the building are two-hour enclosures.

The entrance foyer has six pairs of double doors and a ticket booth that was modified to serve as a concession stand in the late 90's. Wall finishes are pre-cast concrete aggregate, as well as "Sahara Mission" Norman brick veneer, matching that on the exterior.

The gymnasium is a two-story space located on the ground floor with a seating capacity of 2,000. Bleachers are retractable. The gym can be divided into two rooms with a folding partition. Ribbon windows of glass block along the east and west elevations were later filled in with brick. Flooring is maple and walls are concrete. Interior paint color accents are in green and gold, the school colors. Preformed, pre-stressed concrete girders support a metal deck ceiling.

1968 Addition – Cafeteria Annex

The cafeteria annex is a two-story square building sitting on a crenellated concrete plinth that is approximately two feet high. The building features white pre-cast concrete columns with brick veneer infill panels and metal windows that match the gymnasium, however, the annex is more reminiscent of the original school building in its rhythm and geometry. A white concrete band at the top of the first floor aligns with a terra cotta belt course at the main building. The building structure is concrete with steel girders and trusses. The mechanical penthouse exterior wall finish is painted metal mesh.

A breezeway on the south side of the first floor is on axis with a west entrance of the main building. Interior stairs are located at the east and west sides of the building.

A pedestrian bridge of glass and steel connects the annex to the main building. The cafeteria, teachers' lounge, and large central kitchen are located on the second floor. The central kitchen serves 35 schools in the area. On the ground floor are located seven classrooms for metal shop, mechanical drawing, electric lab, health and team teaching, two design studios and an arts and crafts studio.

Building Alterations

In the main lobby of the 1922 building, the original ceiling light fixtures have been replaced with fluorescent lighting. The ceilings have been covered with acoustic tiles. Three murals were added in 1920's. The main office has been extensively remodeled. The original desk and clock were replaced. Walls were placed on the east side of the room to make a small office. Acoustic tiles have been applied to the corridor ceilings. The original lighting fixtures were replaced with fluorescent lights.

Alterations were made in the auditorium in 1960's. Acoustic panels have been applied to the ceiling and walls. The original pendant light fixtures have been replaced with recessed lights and modern stage lighting installed in the ceiling and balcony railing. The seating capacity has been reduced to about 1,000 from its original 1,500.

The library was significantly altered and expanded in 1960's. The original library desks, furnishings and light fixtures have been replaced with mundane casework and furnishings and fluorescent lighting. Ornamental plaster panels are found under acoustic tiles; but it is uncertain whether they are part of the original building. The murals, clock, and two doors on the north wall have been removed.

The former boys' gym is now a fitness center filled with many training equipment. The running track located at mezzanine level has been considered dangerous and can no longer be used by students. The maple strip flooring has been replaced with wood parquet floor. The three large openings between the two gyms have been closed and replaced with walls and a double door.

The original lunchroom was demolished and replaced with classrooms and music rooms in 1968.

The following is a list of major changes made to the Roosevelt High School buildings:

- 1928 A new attached wing with 13 rooms including specialized labs and classrooms
- 1940 Organ installation
- 1947 Alterations in Room 307 and 308
- 1952 Alterations for metal shop and new office
- 1954 Storage building
- 1956 Electrical remodeling
- 1957 Several portables installed
- 1958 Attendance office partition, full-size showcase in office
- 1961 A new detached gymnasium built, Auditorium lighting, speaker enclosure
- 1962 New storage shelving in girls' gym, new wall lockers in boys' main locker room
- 1963 Auditorium P.A. System
- 1965 Dressing and shower room improvement for girls' west gym
- 1966 Library expansion, music room update, enlargement of some classrooms, auditorium seating
- 1968 A new cafeteria annex , Photographic labs, landscaping & drainage improvements, music rooms
- 1969 New folding door between I.B.M. offices
- 1970 Dean of student office remodeling, sound proof door and bulletin board in music room
- 1972 Storage cabinets and shelving in choral room and athletic storage room
- 1973 New suspension ceiling
- 1974 Media center electrical alterations, revised exhaust system in industrial arts room
- 1975 Alterations to LRC
- 1979 New wall and door to space 96
- 1982 Roof Replacement, Carpet Replacement
- 1983 Bleacher Repair
- 1984 Replace HW Lines, Tank, A/C System, Etc.
- 1985 Corridors, Stairs, Windows, Lighting, Burner

- 1986 Locker Renovation
- 1988 Installed deaerator for boiler feed water system
- 1989 Stage Lighting, Roofing and seismic upgrade of roof areas, Replaced auditorium stage fire curtains
- 1990 Main floor boys' and girls' toilet room remodel
- 1991 Kitchen Steam Generator Fuel Oil Tank Work
- 1992 Lead Abatement; Water Bubblers
- 1993 Seismic and Roofing, Locker Room Alterations, Electrical & Data Wiring Upgrade to Four Computers
- 1995 Teen Health Clinic
- 1999 Reroofing, Window Replacement, ADA Elevator, Arts/Science Improvements, Elec/Data/Phone/Internet
- 1999 Replace Gym Athletic Scoreboards, PBX Systems, Clearing Equipment & Upgrades

Roosevelt High School Architects: Naramore and Decker

Floyd A. Naramore

Floyd A. Naramore was born in Illinois in 1879. He graduated from M.I.T. in 1907 with a degree in Architecture. He had been designing schools since 1912 when the Seattle School Board brought him from Portland, Oregon in 1919. He was to serve as Seattle's school architect until 1932 when he went into private practice, later designing additions to many of the schools he designed as architect for the district.

When Floyd Naramore became the district's third architect in 1919, building styles, along with building plans and organizations, changed from American Renaissance to mainly Twentieth Century Georgian. All but a few schools Naramore designed over the next twelve years were given Georgian exteriors with red brick walls and light terra cotta or cast stone detailing, a style adopted for many school buildings throughout the country in the 1920s.

During his tenure, Naramore designed 19 new schools, twelve elementary school buildings, four junior high schools, and three high schools. He also designed 18 additions. The elementary schools Naramore designed were Highland Park (1919), John Hay (1921), Columbia (1922), Dunlap (1924), Montlake (1924), Bryant (1926), E.C. Hughes (1926), Magnolia (1927), Whittier (1928), Daniel Bagley (1929), Laurelhurst (1929), and Loyal Heights (1931). The junior high schools Naramore designed included Alexander Hamilton (1927), John Marshall (1927), James Madison (1929), and James Monroe (1931). Three high schools are Theodore Roosevelt (1922), James Garfield (1923), and Grover Cleveland (1927). Of the 19 new schools and 18 additions Naramore designed for the district, the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board has designated five schools and five additions. The five landmarked schools are John Hay, Dunlap, Bryant, Madison and Cleveland. The five designated additions include buildings at Gatewood (1922), West Seattle (1924), Franklin (1925), Stevens (1928), and Madison (1931).

Roosevelt was the first of three high schools in the district designed by Floyd Naramore and first of his buildings to have a monumentally-scaled entry pavilion, taking advantage of terraces and broad steps which played well against the Georgian facades. Whenever the site allowed, Naramore took advantage of it to create such an effect: all four junior high schools and Cleveland High School designed by him show a similar relationship between building and site.

Roosevelt along with Cleveland and Garfield were built in the 1920s. While different in size and architectural details, they share some common features of the design. Among these is a shift away from the use of light courts extending through to the first floor in the centers of the buildings, a design used in Ballard High School and West Seattle High School by Naramore's predecessor, Edgar Blair. Another feature is the location of auditoriums in the center of the building, flanked by double-loaded corridors. All three buildings have relatively simple massing schemes. They also have stylistic details and organizational schemes that link them to the four junior high schools Naramore designed for the district in 1920s. Of the three, Roosevelt has the simplest style.

Ralf E. Decker

Ralf Decker earned his degree in Architecture at the University of Washington. He founded his own Architecture and Planning firm, Ralf E. Decker, A.I.A., Architect, in 1941. This later became Decker, Kolb & Stansfield Architects, and then Decker, Christenson & Kitchin. Kitchin was a structural engineer. In 1959, this firm collaborated with Bindon & Wright to build the Seattle Main Public Library (demolished in 2001). Christenson died in 1959. Other notable buildings that Decker designed are the University of Washington Book Store (1958), the Tacoma Greyhound Bus Terminal (1959), Washington State University's Research Building for Botany, Zoology, and Bacteriology (1960), and Balmer Hall at the University of Washington (1962).

Architectural Significance

Roosevelt High School is the first of five junior high and high schools designed by Floyd Naramore during 1920s in which Naramore used late Georgian style monumentally-scaled entry pavilions, a design with suitable associative characteristics and a device useful for breaking the rhythm of the necessarily long elevation. The pavilion with its ornate terra cotta balustraded balcony and rusticated base, pedimented spandrels and two-story pilasters is a good example of academic architecture. The side entries are equally impressive.

The wide concrete stairs leading up landscaped terraces to the main entrance enhance the overall late eighteenth century design scheme. The integration of site and building was later fully exploited with the design of Cleveland High School where Naramore had an opportunity to develop a highly visible site. In regard to building style and siting, Roosevelt can be seen as a prototype for the large school buildings that follow.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historic Context

Neighborhood Context

Roosevelt High School is located at the west boundary of the Ravenna Bryant neighborhood of northeast Seattle. Northeast Seattle area was annexed to the City of

Seattle in 1891. In the 1890's children in the Ravenna neighborhood walked on country woods to a small school near Green Lake. The 1908 Kroll Map shows East 66th, 67th, 68th and 69th streets were not through streets and terminated on the east at large residential lots to the west of 15th Avenue NE. There were 49 subdivided yet undeveloped residential parcels within the University Subdivision on East 67th Street at what is now the site of Roosevelt High School. The 1914 Kroll Map indicates within six years, only East 68th Street was a non-through street to 15th Avenue NE. Four houses had been built in the University Subdivision and the large residential lots at the terminus of East 68th Street had been subdivided into sixteen parcels and six houses had been built.

In 1917 the Seattle School District planned for a new high school in Northeast Seattle as the area was developing rapidly and Lincoln High School was overcrowded (Lincoln High School was originally built in 1906 and an addition was constructed in 1915). When plans for construction of Roosevelt High School were announced, the public expressed concern with the proposed location of a large expensive high school in a relatively remote neighborhood with no public transportation existing to the site. However, the immediate neighborhood was supportive of the plan for a new high school.

The 1920 Kroll Map indicates all residential properties of the University Subdivision had been acquired by the School District for a new high school. The District's Architect Naramore's 1921-22 construction progress photos of the school show existing residential development adjacent to the site. When Roosevelt High School opened in 1922, a *Seattle Times* article described the new school as dominating the area with a "commanding sweeping view in all directions," and "prospective high school students of the north end are especially interested in the spacious grounds..."

The presence of Roosevelt High School helped in attracting families and business to the Ravenna neighborhood. The primary building period for homes in the neighborhood was in the 1920's. The 1928 Kroll Map indicates nearly all parcels on properties across from the school on all sides had been developed. Commercial development grew along with housing development. Some of the first commercial businesses in the neighborhood were Sears and Roebuck, a shoe store, a movie theater, several bakeries, beauty shops, barbers, and a gas station. According to 1938 Seattle City Directory, a mix of residential and commercial properties with services such as barber and beauty shops, grocers, pharmacy and lending libraries had developed around E. 65th Street and 15th Avenue NE. Just prior to World War II, Seattle's street railway system ran from downtown Seattle along 15th Avenue NE to NE 80th Street.

Residential properties on the blocks west of Brooklyn Avenue NE between NE 66th and 68th Street were acquired in 1960-61 by the Seattle School District for construction of the

playfield and track west of the 1961 Gymnasium building. The playfield and track were constructed in 1962.

Roosevelt High School is seen as a major community landmark and institution, as reflected by the Neighborhood Plan's stated interest in incorporating aspects of the proposed renovation of Roosevelt High School into the neighborhood plan, "The school should be a positive element of the community and its physical fabric. The community and school district should work together to make this vision a reality."

School History and Significance

In 1917 the District purchased a site for Roosevelt High School. When the construction plan for a new high school was announced, the public complained about the cost of building a million-dollar high school on a site with no access by public transportation. In particular, critics objected to the cost of the 1,500-seat auditorium and stage (at the time one of the largest on the west coast) and the dual gymnasiums for boys and girls. The District defended its plan by pointing to the city's steadily increasing high school enrollment, the benefits of the modern auditorium to the whole community, and state requirements for physical education. World War I delayed the launch of construction until 1921. In September 1922, the District's newest, most modern high school opened to nearly 1,300 students and 47 teachers, led by Principal V.K. Froula. Under Froula many student activities got started including opera, play revue, concerts and the award-winning newspaper, *The News*. The first annual *Strenuous Life* was published in 1923.

Enrollment at Roosevelt reached near its 1,450 capacity when opened in 1922. It grew to almost 2,000 by 1927. A new north wing, designed by Naramore to accommodate 450 more students, opened in 1928 with 13 classrooms and labs. Enrollment continued to grow and, by 1938, Roosevelt had 2,500 students. In 1957, with enrollment at 2,700 students, several portables were added to the grounds. A new gymnasium opened in 1961 to the west of the main building. Further remodeling in 1960's facilitated innovations such as team teaching, independent study, and flexible scheduling. An annex was constructed in 1968 and housed a cafeteria as well as specialized classrooms. In 1971 Roosevelt became a four-year high school. Because enrollment exceeded building capacity, 9th graders were shifted to John Marshall Junior High, located six blocks west of Roosevelt. This building was then known as Roosevelt M (for Marshall) and continued to operate as a 9th grade center through June 1975. In September 1975, all classes were held on the Roosevelt campus except two special education classes. Today Roosevelt is the largest high school in the district with enrollment of 1,725 students at grades 9 to 12.

Roosevelt's student body reflects the diversity of Seattle. It includes about 10% limited English-speaking proficiency students. About three percent of the students are Native Americans, seven percent, African Americans, eight percent, Latinos, 26%, Asians, and 55%, Caucasians.

Roosevelt is most highly noted for its performing arts curriculum (theater and music), world language classes (French, Latin, Japanese, Spanish) and American Sign Language, and its general academic focus that includes many honors and Advanced Placement classes. Roosevelt's drama program has been named one of the top ten in the nation. Its Concert Orchestra, Marching Band,

Jazz Band, and Vocal Jazz Ensemble consistently win acclaim. In 2002 the Jazz band placed first in the prestigious Essentially Ellington competition at New York City's Lincoln Center. Students at Roosevelt had the highest cumulative scores of all Seattle high school students for the first two years in the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) test. Spring 2001 Roosevelt sophomores obtained the highest WASL scores in each of the four content areas (Math, Reading, Writing and Listening) in the district and were among the higher scoring students regionally. A Senior Project is a graduation requirement at Roosevelt. Nearly 85% of Roosevelt's 2001 graduates were accepted by two- or four-year colleges. Roosevelt's athletic programs have risen to challenge of the highly competitive KingCo 4A conference. During the 2000-2001 academic year, they won KingCo championships in girls swimming and in girls soccer. The girls soccer team also placed second in the state. The girls swimming placed fourth in the state.

Roosevelt has produced many outstanding graduates. Here are some of the notable alumni and their professional areas. Maynard Pennell who went to Roosevelt in the 1920's was former vice president of technology at The Boeing Company and leader of the team that designed the first U.S. jet transport. Eddie Peabody known as "The King of Banjo" was the most famous banjo player of all time. He is credited with designing the "plectrum" style of banjo and also with inventing the Banjoline. He inspired many musicians. He is acknowledged as having made an enormous contribution to the art of banjo playing for over 50 years.

James Fitzgerald, a Roosevelt graduate in the 1920's, was a nationally known painter and sculptor and one of the leading modernist sculptors of the Pacific Northwest. His work was mounted in exhibits at the Seattle Art Museum, the San Francisco Museum, and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, and was included in numerous exhibitions in major national museums.

Tom Gorman, Class of 1933, played on the pro tennis circuit for 15 years. For five years Gorman ranked in the U.S. top ten for both singles and doubles players peaking at number ten in the world in 1974. He played on three Davis Cup squads, and later coached the Davis Cup squad for seven years, the longest tenure in U.S. Davis Cup history.

Thomas Griffith, attended Roosevelt in the 30's, was an editor of *Lift* magazine. Wing Luke, a former member of the Seattle City Council, went to Roosevelt in the 40's. When he won the council seat, Luke was the first Asian American to hold elected office in the Pacific Northwest. He fought for civil rights and promoted urban renewal while also advocating historic preservation. His inspiring work for the community's future and his acknowledgment of the historic contributions of our predecessors have been recognized and commemorated by building the Wing Luke Asian Museum.

Daniel Evans, Class of 1943, was a member of the Washington State House of Representatives from 1958 to 1965, and Washington State Governor from 1965 to 1977. He served as a U.S. Senator from 1983 to 1989. He was appointed to the University of Washington Board of Regents in 1989 and became the second U.W. alumnus to have a U.W. school named after him (the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs).

Robert E. Lucas Jr., Class of 1955, taught economics at the University of Chicago. In 1995 he was awarded the Nobel economics prize and was recognized for having the greatest influence on macroeconomic research since 1970.

Community and The School

Roosevelt High School was the recipient of a five-year grant from the Gates Foundation. Roosevelt participants in PIPE partnerships with the Sunrise Rotary, Children's Medical Center, North Seattle Community College, and Federal Home Loan Bank. PTSA is an active support organization for many programs and activities at Roosevelt. It also publishes a newsletter, *Rider Record*, six times a year. An active site council consisted of elected parents, students, community, and faculty representatives, meets monthly to review school programs and policies. Parent organizations such as Athletic Boosters, Drama Boosters, and Orchestra Parents, organize programs and raise funds to support student activities.

Roosevelt has a very active alumnus. Many groups and individuals continue to contribute to their high school after graduation by volunteering time, resources, and making scholarships and monetary gifts to the school. The *Golden Grads*, alumni of at least fifty years, and other community groups and individuals annually award scholarships for graduating seniors.

Architectural Significance

Roosevelt High School is the first of five junior high and high schools designed by Floyd Naramore during 1920s in which Naramore used late Georgian style monumentally-scaled entry pavilions, a design with suitable associative characteristics and a device useful for breaking the rhythm of the necessarily long elevation. The pavilion with its ornate terra cotta balustraded balcony and rusticated base, pedimented spandrels and two-story pilasters is a good example of academic architecture. The side entries are equally impressive.

The wide concrete stairs leading up landscaped terraces to the main entrance enhance the overall late eighteenth century design scheme. The integration of site and building was later fully exploited with the design of Cleveland High School where Naramore had an opportunity to develop a highly visible site. In regard to building style and siting, Roosevelt can be seen as a prototype for the large school buildings that follow.

The features of the Landmark to be preserved, include:

- The exterior of the 1922 building and the 1928 addition
- The following features of the interior of the 1922 building: the main lobby, including the murals, the clocks in the hallways, the auditorium, and the former boys' and girls' gyms
- The site, excluding the 1961 gymnasium, the 1968 annex building and connecting pedestrian skybridge, the breezeways, the greenhouse, the portables, and the playfield and running track area

Issued: June 18, 2002



Karen Gordon
City Historic Preservation Officer

cc: Joseph Olchefske, SSD
John Vacchiery, SSD
Gary Baldasari, SSD
Kathy Johnson, SSD
Tinyu Wang, SSD
Ralph Rower, Heery
Marilyn Brockman
Lorne McConachie, Chair, LPB
Diane Sugimura, DCLU
Cheryl Mosteller, DCLU
Ken Mar, DCLU